

# The Democratic Standard.

DEVOTED TO THE SUPPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND LAWS—THE DIFFUSION OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE—AND THE REFORM OF ALL POLITICAL ABUSES.

BY D. P. PALMER.

GEORGETOWN, O., THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1840.

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## THE PEOPLE'S JUSTICE SLOW, BUT SURE!

One of the characteristics of Federalism, from the moment of its birth, was the inveterate hatred which it bore to a free press. This feeling was avowed by the party, until, by the establishment of a great national bank, the arbitrary and untrammelled use of the public revenue, day after day, pouring into the bottomless deep of the vaults of that giant institution, together with that of an enormous fictive capital, represented by a never-to-be-redeemed paper currency, they became possessed of the means of purchasing that great lever of modern civilization, making it the instrument of their sinister designs. This deadly hostility to a free press, the most precious of those institutions which our ancestors brought with them—the household gods of the British race—the Federalists manifested, early in the administration of the elder Adams, in bitter vituperation, infamously denunciations against William Duane, the uncompromising editor of the "Aurora," through the "Porcupine," published by Cobbet, an avowed monarchist—through their daily papers and monthly reviews, edited by Fenno, Dennis, Relf, and others, some subsidized, and all patronized by the Federalists. But when fiercely lashed by Duane's untiring arm, the leaders of the faction, no longer able to endure this merited chastisement, vented their rage against a free press, on the very floor of Congress! Made bolder, at length, by the patience with which the nation had hitherto borne their misdeeds, in the year 1798, on the 4th of July!—(Americans mark the day!) in insulting derision of that birth-day of Independent America, in guilty violation of that holy Sabbath of freedom, and as to "seeth the lamb in its mother's milk!" the Federal majority in the Senate passed a bill, since commonly called the sedition law—an act, intended by its authors to stifle truth itself, lest it should proclaim their turpitude. It passed in spite of the persevering efforts of Gallatin, Livingston, Nicholas, Nathaniel, Macdon, Matthew Lyon, Samuel Smith, Th. Sumpter, Venable Brent, sustained by that Phalanx of patriots, whose names will ever live in the gratitude of their fellow Democrats. Defeated by numbers in the Federal councils, those faithful representatives victoriously succeeded, however, in the opinion of the nation, in proving, by unrefuted argument, that the provisions of the new law violated the charter enactments of the Constitution, while at the same time the very title of the law itself contradicts all the principles proclaimed by the founders of our independence, and maintained at the price of a seven years' war, of the blood of patriots and the expenditure of countless millions! We insert the second section of that law that the young Democrats of the day may understand what were the tenets of the adversaries, whom their fathers have vanquished in the battle for constitutional rights.

"Be it further enacted, That if any person shall write, print, utter or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, printed, uttered, or published, or shall knowingly and wilfully assist or aid in writing, printing, uttering, or publishing, any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings against the Government of the United States, or either House of the Congress of the United States, or of the President of the United States, with an intent to defame the said Government, or the President, or to bring them, or either of them into contempt or disrespect, or to excite against them, or either or any of them, the hatred of the good people of the United States, etc., then such person, being thereof convicted before any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years."

In the month of October of the same year, (1798) just ninety days after the passage of the act, allowing no time for the good sword of the law to rust in the scabbard, the Adams administration, as if impatient to try the keenness of the edge, waved vengeful over the head of

its intended first victim. Nor had that victim been unduly marked as the object of their prosecution. Matthew Lyon, an American by naturalization, an Irishman by birth, (naturalized Irishmen take notice of this fact, and bear it in mind, when, in November next you go to the polls,) was a respectable farmer of Vermont, the father of a numerous family, and so endeared to his fellow-citizens, both as a public and a private man, that he had been called by their suffrages to represent them in Congress. Some of those very qualities, however, that had designated him to the confidence and affection of Democracy, had pointed him out to Federalism as a powerful and dangerous adversary. They deemed it an act of policy to strike terror among all naturalized citizens, by directing the infliction of their new penal act against an offender belonging to that respectable portion of our political family. On the other hand, the sturdy Democrat seems to have courted, rather than shunned, this contest between right and might: this struggle between the supreme law of the land that protected, and the law of a party that threatened him. He had weighed the probable results of what he intended, before he wrote and published—but, like Hampden, he had determined, at all hazards, to test the constitutionality of the new statute. His aim was to place his authors in the embarrassing dilemma either to let lie dormant and harmless, a *brutum fulmen*, in their law arsenal, or to meet, in broad daylight, the indignant eyes of American patriots, if they attempted to execute its penal enactments. In the former alternative, contempt would visit the faint-hearted politicians, who, having threatened, had not the hardihood to strike when defied; and in the other hypothesis, odium, deep, undying odium, would attach to the grand jury that should denounce the pretended offence; to the petit jury, who, in the trial of the cause, under the provisions of that act, should allow their right of determining whether or not the words set forth in the indictment were false, scandalous, and malicious, to be even questioned; and to the judge, who, usurping this right—the patrimony of American jurymen—should, without the special finding of the jury to that effect, pronounce the publication libellous.

A part of this memorable publication, thrown by its fearless author in the very teeth of the self-made inquisitors into the expressed thoughts of free Americans on political subjects, and in relation to acts of public functionaries, we transcribe, word for word. We do it for those American Democrats grown up to manhood, and ripened into age, since the calamity of 1798, under the wise and temperate administration of Jefferson, Madison and Monroe; even under the four years of the younger Adams, (for he durst not ex-hume the fabled corpse of the sedition law and bring it, galvanized, into a second, unnatural, convulsive existence,) under the glorious Presidency of people-born hickory Jackson; and now, under the auspicious administration of Martin Van Buren, a statesman as intent on preserving the Union as Washington; as tenacious of State rights as Jefferson; as acute in the prevision and avoidance of collision between State sovereignties and Federal powers as Madison; as unostentatious, mild, and conciliatory as Monroe; as bold and determined, in all internal questions, to maintain the unsullied fame of American honor, as Jackson himself; like him, too, inflexibly resolved to free our country from the trammels of Bank monopoly; and, to close this parallel, like two of his illustrious predecessors, Jefferson and Jackson, the object of the undying hatred of the confederated foes of Democracy! Nearly half a century of uninterrupted felicity, of unshackled freedom, both of body and mind, to which future historians may well apply the boast of Tacitus, who, living in the reign of Trojan, exclaimed, in the exultation of a disenthralled mind: "A glorious period! in which, through the rare felicity of the times, a man may think with freedom, and what he thinks, he may publish to the world!"

We do so, we repeat it, that the Democracy of our day may understand what were the bearings of that odious law; and over what fearful extent of debasing repression it could be made to stretch, by timorous or packed jurymen. Here you have it all, Americans; read and meditate!

"As to the Executive, when I shall see the effects of that power bent on the promotion of the comfort, the happiness, and accommodation of the people, that Executive shall have my zealous and uniform support. But whenever I shall, on the part of our Executive, see every consideration of public welfare swallowed up in a continual grasp for power, in an unbounded thirst for ridiculous pomp, foolish adulation, and selfish avarice—when I shall behold men of real merit daily turned out of office for no other cause than indecency of sentiment—when I shall see

men of firmness, merit, years, abilities and experience discarded in their application for offices, for fear they possess that independence, and men of meanness preferred for the ease with which they can take up and advocate opinions, the consequences of which they know but little of—when I shall see the sacred name of religion employed as a State engine to make mankind hate and persecute each other, I shall not be his humble advocate!" The second count in the indictment, on which the said Matthew Lyon was convicted, charged him with printing and publishing a seditious writing or libel, entitled "Copy of a letter from an American diplomatic character in France, (Mr. Joel Barlow,) to a member of Congress in Philadelphia," which was in the following words, to wit: "The misunderstanding between the two Governments has become extremely alarming; confidence is completely destroyed; mistrust, jealousies, and a disposition to a wrong attribution of motives, are so apparent as to require the utmost caution in every word and action that are to come from our Executive—I mean if your object is to avoid hostilities. Had this truth been understood with you before the recall of Monroe—before the coming and second coming of Pinckney; had it guided the pens that wrote the bullying speech of your President, and stupid answer of your Senate, at the opening of Congress, in November last, I should probably have no occasion to address you this letter. But when we found him borrowing the language of Edmund Burke, and telling the world that, although he should succeed in treating with the French, there was no dependence to be placed in any of their engagements; that their religion and morality were at an end, and they had turned pirates and plunderers, and that it would be necessary to be perpetually armed against them, though you are at peace, we wonder that the answer of both Houses had not been an order to send him to the mad-house. Instead of this, the Senate have echoed the speech with more servility than ever George the Third experienced from either House of Parliament."

"Upon this indictment," to use the words of a late committee, "Matthew Lyon was convicted and sentenced by the court to be imprisoned four months; to pay a fine of one thousand dollars, and the costs of the prosecution, taxed at sixty dollars and ninety-six cents; and to stand committed until the fine and costs were paid; which were paid, as appears by the exemplification of the record of the said trial proceedings, now in the archives of this House!"

Here we pause in astonishment, that the madness of infuriated zeal should have driven a party into a measure of so unexampled imprudence as the institution of a criminal prosecution for language which, when we compare it to the rabid effusions of the Whig press of the day, seems so tame and so guarded, that did we not know the unadvised energy of the bold and honest Democrat by whom it was used, we would be tempted to infer that, in the dread of the vengeance of his enemies, he had carefully avoided any expression that might even by the most stretched and forced construction of that odious law, bring him within the iron grasp of any of its penal enactments. Indeed, such an infatuation would appear incredible had its memory been left entrusted, in tradition only, to the keeping of contemporaries, the appalled witnesses of the wild orgies of the times, so aptly termed 'the reign of terror,' instead of being preserved, recorded and undying, in the young annals of our country. The Federalists, then dominant and rioting in the exercise of the power wrested from the people, had become hallucinated by the truculent hope of perpetuating their sway by the swords of a mercenary soldiery, a standing army of 40,000 men, to be raised during a period of profound peace, commanded by officers, called, as they termed it, from among the gilded aristocracy of the land by the support of not a few lawyers, a body of men, often too ready to enlist under the banner of high-handed power; and lastly, by the sanction obtained for their acts, at the hands of a "willing judiciary!"

Each day was marked with some violence, acted with the semblance and the forms of justice, in courts of law; but not the less, on that account, in violation of the supreme law of the land—the American Constitution. Fries, an industrious Pennsylvania farmer, a German by birth, we believe, but a natural citizen—let the Germans, too, remember this at the ballot box, in November next—was tried, and all the rules protective of life and liberty were so openly disregarded and trodden upon by a Federal judge, that a son of President Adams, a youth of unsophisticated judgment, and unused to judicial subtleties, (not J. Q. Adams) reported to his father that the German farmer had not been allowed a full hearing, nor had had the benefit of a fair trial. A pardon was the consequence of this dis-

closure. This act of mercy, which spared our country the disgrace of capital punishment, for a political offence, we record with pleasure, to the credit of John Adams. It is one of the redeeming traits of that man's motley character and checkered politics, which, added to the frank acknowledgment of the error of his measures, has all but rescued his memory from the odium that still attaches to the detestable principles of his administration; to his coadjutors in those days, and to those who revive his doctrines in ours. Cooper, a name dear to learning and freedom, the half-lapidated victim of a Pitt-excited mob at Birmingham, the fellow-sufferer and fellow-exile of Priestly—let Democratic naturalized Englishmen remember this at the November polls—Cooper was marked as the next object of Federal persecution. He, too, like Lyon, had resolved to dare the terrors of the new law. Of men and measures he wrote with the same freedom, which Pitt had summarily punished by the hands of hired bullies. He poured out his thoughts without anger or malice, but with the boldness of one conscious of his rights, and having the courage to assert them.—We have not his trial at hand; memory, however, serves us in the recollection of his warm and eloquent, yet guarded expressions; clothed in that language of courtesy, which men accustomed to the elegancies of literary composition, can always command to render truth, if not welcome, at least inoffensive to power. But against a predetermined judgment, nothing could avail! The words set forth in the indictment, were, as in the case of Lyon, deemed libellous by the court; and he, also, was imprisoned and fined!

Richmond, the capital of Democratic Virginia, in turn became the theatre, where like scenes were enacted; and, as is the wont with unrestrained power, assumed or delegated, the judge's conduct was more at war with judicial usages and official decencies than even in Pennsylvania and Vermont. The zeal of grand jurors was excited by inflammatory harangues, under the disguise of instructions as to the mode of discharging their high functions. Offenders were not named; but so designated as to be unerringly marked for prosecution, and predeclared guilty of the infractions alleged against them, in advance of their condemnation. Even a lawyer thought to be a Democrat—time has since shown that he was not very fervent in that faith—was bullied and insulted, sometimes with keen and bitter sarcasms, and again with austere and contemptuous censures.

"While the judiciary were satisfactorily performing the part assigned to them in the drama of that gloomy period, the military did not rest idly under arms. William Duane, for some alleged publication, which had wounded the morbid susceptibility of some black cockade hero, was attacked in his printing office—struck to the ground—inhumanly trampled upon, and left wailing in his blood!"

This was the last act, the crowning glory of the days of terror. The profligate Federal press, daily reviling the memory of Franklin; the cannibal songs; the mad rances of embroiled Federal mobs, insulting Jefferson whenever he walked the streets of Philadelphia; nay, scoffing at him in front of that very Hall where sat the old Congress, and whence was sent forth to the world his Declaration of Independence—the noblest appeal ever addressed to God and man in the name of an oppressed people; infuriated bands of brawlers, disturbing the privacy and rest of the sage by nightly howling under his windows, mocking the ferocious yell of beasts of prey; these clamors of royalists and Tories; these loud vauntings of the discomfited of 1783; these defying of theirs, hurled at those who had conquered them at Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Trenton, and York; all these, at last, roused the sleeping energies of the people. The State Legislature gave the signal. Virginia in '97, as in '76, took the lead. Kentucky, the child of her nurturing, responded to her call. It was a bloodless revolution; but still a revolution. It was a re-enactment of the bill of rights; a second adoption of the Declaration of Independence; a re-proclaiming of the Constitution; a new apotheosis of the heroes and sages of the war of freedom!"

## A DEMOCRAT OF '98.

From the Richmond (Va.) Crisis.  
EXPENDITURES—FEDERAL PERVERSION AND GARBLING.

Under this head, the Whig of the 27th contains some "specification" of alleged extravagance and waste of money by the Administration. We are unable to say whether they are true or not; but if true, they fall in the object for which they are paraded before the public eye. It is usual for Government in every Department of its service, to furnish articles of the description specified. If any of them seem to have been charged for at an extravagant price, it is but another confirmation of a very well known fact that "Uncle Sam" is, and always has been, expected to pay higher prices than individuals. An illustration can be easily and readily furnished for the information of the

Whig, which we ask him to copy into his next number after this appears, for the information of his readers. We offer it as a "specification" of Whig extravagance and speculation, absolutely beyond the control of the President or his friends. It will be remembered, that on the motion and at the instance of the Whigs in Congress, a committee was raised for the purpose of whitewashing the Swartwout defalcation. A majority of the Whigs constituted that committee. They proceeded to New York; took rooms, lodging, &c., and here is their account against the Government. It will be seen, that their object was not to recover back any portion of the default it was their business to investigate, but to "fine their own pockets with cash," by participating in it:

**House of Representatives.**  
To Select Committee on Defalcations:  
Cash paid Astor House for sixteen and a half days' board for six members, viz: Messrs. Harlan, Wise, Smith, Curtis, Hopkins, Dawson, and Mr. Feudall, their clerk, (wines and liquors not included,) \$400 10  
Extra charges for fuel, rooms, lights, &c. 110 00  
Paid messenger, Messrs. Owens, Foster and Wagener's bill at American Hotel, 210 00  
Milage, 500 miles, for nine members, 1,900 00  
Same for clerk, 200 00  
\$2,736 54

Four hundred dollars and ten cents for the board of 10 men sixteen and a half days. Eighteen hundred dollars to defray the travelling expense of 10 men to and from New York! Here's waste and extravagance for you—here's a case for the Whigs to put the seal of their reprobation on, if they really are enemies to extravagance; but this case and hundreds of others, are carefully concealed from the "public eye," as they would now conceal the opinions of their candidate, whilst, by falsehood, perversion and garbling of the public vouchers of the country, they are busily engaged in making the impression, that the very extravagance and waste which they have occasioned are justly chargeable to the friends of the administration. Let us analyze this account a little further, and see if these economical whigs have not themselves been choosing the people, and how much of their hard earnings they actually embezzled during their profitable pleasure trip to New York. We will say nothing about any portion of the account but mileage.—Well, of this how much did each man receive?

The charge for mileage was \$2,000  
Actual expenses in going to and returning from N. York, could not have been more than \$30 each; which for thirteen, would amount to 390

Leaving 1,700 more than they paid out.  
Pay as members of Congress in mean time, \$132 each, for 9 members 1,188  
Aggregate, 2,888  
Off for Clerk, 200

\$2,688  
Each member's portion of this amount was 299 dollars 66c for 164 days, running up for each day they were in New York, the compensation to the next little sum of 18 dollars and 16 cents—being 10 dollars and 16 more per day for 164 days, than they were in equity and justice entitled to; making the large sum (including 170 dollars for the clerk, which in all he should have had,) of one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight dollars and ninety-four cents, out of which this committee of whigs filched the public treasury, and then had the audacity and meanness to charge their own crimes upon the President! "O shame, where is the blush!" The printing also which grew out of this rotten concern, amounted to the sum of 18,000 dollars. Wise and Peyton's committee in 1837, cost for printing 50,000 dollars. The Indian, book and light house expenditures, slavery from that date, in his settled public account. The Intelligencer states, that he was recalled by Gen. Jackson, "for exercising the elective franchise; which election was on the 3d of November following. For nearly six months he received a salary of 9,000 dollars as minister to a foreign government, while he was electioneering in Ohio for John Q. Adams. As an honest man, ought he to have charged the United States for that time his employment? Are such constructive service recommendations for the more responsible office of President of the United States? Answer, ye 'whigs' who support him."

## TO A BANK NOTE.

I will not take thee, ragged elf,  
In payment for my labor—  
Your villainy's revealed itself,  
You've robbed myself and neighbor.  
Your very face is all a lie,  
Your promise but a bubble;  
You raise the price on all I buy,  
And plunge mankind in trouble.  
And when we ask you for the cash—  
How well the matter's mended!  
We find your Bank 'is broke to smash,'  
Oh, hang you! you're suspended!  
For bank the farmer grows his corn—  
The laborer gives his earning;  
The student, like a sheep, is shorn,  
In spite of all his learning.

The federal party are awfully afraid that their true position will be ascertained with regard to foreigners. We hope every foreign voter will take the pains to look at the course of the federal party from the time of Adams and Hamilton to this day. They will find that a feeling exists to disfranchise them, and ever has existed with that party. They will deny it now, just before an election; but let them get into power and the naturalization laws will be repealed.—Argus.

## From the Cincinnati Advertiser and Journal. THE STANDING ARMY, OF 200,000 MEN!

We this day publish one of the most interesting documents ever laid before the American people—the reply of the President of the United States, to certain interrogations propounded to him by four respectable citizens of Virginia, upon the most important topics of the day, which we recommend to the particular attention of our readers, who there will find that Mr. Van Buren, with the utmost promptitude, expresses his sentiments upon those important points. His "policy" is not that of his competitor, "to make no declaration of principles for the public eye, whilst in his present position." His policy is, openly and fearlessly to avow his principles, and to make declaration of those upon which he will conduct the government if elected. And let the people vote or vote not for him, at the ensuing election, he writes no private letters to one part of the union in favor of abolition, and to another part of it in direct opposition to abolitionism. He does not confess that he was a member of an abolition society to one man, and declares to another that he never was—or "till within a few weeks never knew of the existence of such societies." He does not, for months, cajole the abolitionists, and impress them with the belief that he is friendly to their cause, and boast to the slaveholders that no man, south of Mason and Dixon's line, has done more for the cause of slavery. He treats all men alike. His declarations are openly made to all parties. He skulks not under incendiary letters that must not be published, but may be made any other use of.

Let the reader look to the delicate manner in which he alludes to his competitor, and compare it with the report of that competitor's speech at Greenville, in which he denounces Mr. Van Buren with intending to "add to the regular force of the Union, a standing army of 200,000 men."

Let the reader compare the document presented to him this day, with the Bobulid, egotistical speeches of General Harrison, replete with absolute falsehoods as well as misrepresentations, and then decide which of the two is best qualified for the office they pretend to, and which best deserves his support at the election.

**GOOD TIMES AHEAD!**—From all quarters of the country, the cry is, that business is "rapidly improving." The manufacturers are again setting their wheels in motion, and the mechanic is "bracing up, for a brisk full trade. Under the Independent Treasury, the times will improve, be steady, and prosperous, and the federal politicians cannot prevent it.—There may not be as much speculation, but industry will be better rewarded than ever before. The financial policy of the country is settled, and every one knows now what to depend upon. Hence all kinds of productive business will be pushed steadily ahead, and within the coming year, we predict, that more real, substantial wealth will be acquired in this country, than has ever been in any single year since our independence was achieved.

New Haven Register.

Here is an extract from "the Pulse of the People," published at Woodstock, Vt., by C. G. Eastman, Esq., a very spirited political writer.

"It is of no sort of moment in this contest, whether General Harrison is the bravest warrior or the meanest coward, that ever graced or disgraced the pages of history. Let the man alone. His principles! his principles! It is sufficient for the old republicans to know that he is the candidate of the old Federalists."

**A NICE POINT.**—The United States Marshal for the district of Cincinnati, whose duty it is in taking the census of the people, to return accurate lists of the voters in the United States, is in doubt whether Gen. Harrison should or should not be included in that category. The Louisville advertiser, from which we learn the fact, thinks he should not; because he is dumb only when it suits his convenience.

**REMEMBER!** Col. R. M. Johnson has plenty of wounds upon his body, but not a single certificate of bravery in his pockets!

Gen. Wm. H. Harrison has a plenty of certificates of bravery in his pockets, but not a single wound upon his body! Mark the difference between a real hero and a sham hero!—Globe.

Extract from Gen. Harrison's speech at Cleveland, Ohio:

"I rely upon the good opinion of my countrymen—I care nothing for the opinions of those who have come either three thousand miles across the water."

Chicago Democrat.